

VZCZCXRO6024  
OO RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHLH RUEHPW  
DE RUEHEK #0071/01 0181218  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 181218Z JAN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0574  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2402  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0822  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2808  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2192  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000071

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/18/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ OPPOSITION HOLDS JOINT MEETING; GOVERNMENT  
PRESSURE CONTINUES

BISHKEK 00000071 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Amb. Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Several Kyrgyz opposition parties and civil society groups held a joint meeting January 14 under the "For Justice" banner. Ex-Foreign Minister Jekshenkulov moderated the discussion, and various speakers sharply criticized the government for the conduct of the December parliamentary elections. Former Security Council Secretary Niyazov drew the biggest applause when he said the opposition might have to resort to "extra-legal" actions because justice could not be obtained in the courts. Government pressure against opposition figures continues, apparently prompting former MP Kubatbek Baibolov and his wife, former Bishkek City Council Chair Nurjamal Baibolova, to withdraw from politics. End Summary.

Referendum, Elections Denounced  
-----

12. (SBU) Around 150 opposition party and civil society representatives held a joint meeting on January 14 to assess the October constitutional referendum and the December parliamentary elections and to plan future actions. Former FM Alikbek Jekshenkulov moderated the discussion under the banner of his new "For Justice" opposition group. Several speakers accused President Bakiyev directly of abusing his power and using administrative resources to ensure a landslide victory for the pro-presidential Ak Jol party, and they characterized the referendum and elections as "undemocratic."

13. (C) Ex-MP and Ata Meken member Temir Sariyev complained that Ata Meken had been excluded from the new parliament. He accused the Central Election Commission (CEC) of falsifying official protocols from Osh city to keep Ata Meken out of parliament, and he detailed his party's failure to receive a fair, unbiased decision from the Supreme Court after contesting the CEC's actions. Ata Meken member and Adilet

Legal Clinic Director Cholpon Jakupova separately called the courts "highly politicized," and noted the futile attempts to change the system through mass protests. She earlier speculated to Poloff that "stricter" measures may be needed, akin to the actions taken during the March 2005 "revolution."

¶4. (SBU) Representatives from the Social Democratic Party (SDPK), which was awarded seats in the new parliament, also attended, but this show of loyalty to the opposition was not particularly well received by the audience. SDPK Party MP and former Foreign Minister Roza Otunbayeva criticized the parliamentary elections as "a serious retreat from democracy" that served only to intensify existing north-south divisions within the country. New SDPK MP (and former AUCA Vice President) Bakyt Beshimov also attended, but did not speak.

#### "People's Parliament" Planned

-----

¶5. (SBU) Looking forward at possible next steps, Ar Namys party leader Emil Aliyev urged that all actions taken be within the framework of law. Former Security Council Secretary Miroslav Niyazov, however, received the biggest

SIPDIS

applause from the group when he denounced the current parliament and government as "illegitimate," and said that "extra-legal" actions might be necessary because the courts "lack any independent authority."

¶6. (SBU) The "For Justice" group announced that it would create a "people's parliament" within a month, to "discuss and propose alternative viewpoints on social-political and economic issues affecting Kyrgyzstan." The group also announced that a "people's gathering," or "kurultai," would be held by the spring.

BISHKEK 00000071 002.2 OF 002

#### Opposition Supporters Pressured . . . Again

-----

¶7. (C) Jakupova complained to Poloff that the Prosecutor General's office has reopened previously closed cases against ex-opposition MP Kubatbek Baibolov and opposition supporter/businessman Omurbek Abdrahmanov, involving businesses owned by each. Jakupova feared the government would "stop at nothing" to silence the opposition. The Ata Meken party later told the press that the State Committee on Taxes and Revenues would be inspecting the financial records of most opposition parties.

¶8. (C) Separately, Baibolov's wife, Nurjamal, relayed to Poloff her fears for the safety of her family in connection with the government's investigations into Ata Meken and her husband's businesses. The Baibolovs subsequently announced publicly that they are withdrawing from political activity. In a January 18 meeting with the Ambassador, Kubatbek Baibolov confirmed that the couple were leaving politics, his wife was already in Almaty with their children, and he would leave the country after "sorting out" his business interests in the next few months.

#### A Disunited Opposition

-----

¶9. (C) In a meeting with the Ambassador January 16, ex-MP and SDPK member Omurbek Babanov said that opposition groups have differing goals and are not united. He saw a division between those interested in step-by-step, systematic change and those interested only in the fight for power. He predicted that opposition groups would take action only after the government makes any serious political mistakes. Steps taken by the government, including the way it handles the privatization of Kyrgyzstan's energy sector and rising prices

over the next three months, will determine the direction the opposition will take, he added. If the government's moves prove to be unpopular, people will take to the streets, said Babanov. Babanov also said that the opposition needs new, younger leaders to lead the charge, not unlike Ukraine's Yulia Tymoshenko or Georgia's Mikheil Saakashvili.

Comment

-----

¶10. (C) The "For Justice" meeting produced little agreement about next steps, other than to hold a "people's parliament."

The opposition itself remains disunited, divided by those interested in step-by-step changes and those who believe stronger measures are needed. And government pressure continues, driving some in the opposition, such as the Baibolovs, to say they are abandoning the struggle altogether.

YOVANOVITCH